

HON. RON PAUL OF TEXAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES June 4, 2003

Let's Keep All Representatives Elected

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the privately funded and privately constituted "Continuity of Government Commission" has recently proposed that, for the first time in our nation's history, we should allow the appointment of members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Not only does this proposal fail to comport with the intention of the founders of this nation, but even worse, it advocates a solution that has been repeatedly rejected by this body.

The report of this so-called "Commission" makes clear that while the Senate has, from time to time, voted to pass constitutional amendments allowing for the appointment of House members, this body has always jealously guarded its status as "the people's House" by failing to pass such amendments. A brief history review may be in order at this point. First, our Nation has been under attack from foreign powers in the past, such as in its nascent years when the British were constantly "coming" In our own century, we faced an attack on Pearl Harbor as well as the very real threat of nuclear annihilation. Now, because we have learned that our Capitol was a potential target in a terror plot, there is an outcry from some corners regarding our vulnerability. Our government leaders are no more vulnerable today to mass extinction than they were 20 years ago. Our top-flight military makes us, in many ways, less vulnerable to attack and the assassination of our leaders than we were 200 years ago.

Even if we were to sustain such a devastating attack, the nightmare scenario painted in the first report of the "commission" is not only far-fetched, but also admits of a plethora of potential solutions already existent in our current constitutional structure. Though the report endeavors to cast doubt on the legitimacy of those structures, it is unsuccessful. Moreover, what could be more offensive to our republican form of government and of more questionable legitimacy, than to have a slew of un-elected "representatives" outvote elected people on the floor of our U.S. House?

Let's face it: we can scare people and doom-say anytime we wish, but it would only be in the case of a near-complete annihilation that our government would fail to function. In such an instance there is no "system" that will preserve our government. On the other hand, if we surrender the right to elect people to the U.S. House of Representatives under any circumstances, we will be on a slippery slope away from the few remaining vestiges and most

precious principles of the government left to us by our founders.

In the event that this “proposal” gets more serious and is given long-term attention, I will place in the record more detailed statements defending the notion of an all-elected House of Representatives, and explaining the fallacies and illogic found in this report. For now Mr. Speaker, I simply wish to go on record as among those who would fight to the last to preserve the principle of a House of Representatives consisting entirely of members elected by the people.